

Letter from Arthur Gilman to Alexander Graham Bell, January 3, 1898, with transcript

(Copy of letter to Dr. A. Graham Bell, from Mr. Arthur Gilman.) VOLTA BUREAU, JAN 17, 1898 WASHINGTON, D.C. THE CAMBRIDGE SCHOOL. January 3, 1898. My dear Dr. Bell:

My feeling towards Miss Sullivan is expressed in the article that I wrote for the Annals. I have no ill-feeling towards her, and it is far from my desire to keep her from any other than that her friends wish for her in the Fund that is growing in New York. While I entertain these sentiments, I am more interested in Helen, and I am not able consienciously to say that I favor any plan that binds Helen to Miss S., for life. So far as Helen is concerned, I wrote to Mrs. Keller that I was willing, and I still am, to continue Helen's education, assuming all the responsibility for raising any funds that may be needed to make it the best practicable. I regret much that it was impossible for you to meet Dr. Humason, and me in New York; but, doubtless, Dr. H., will tell you all that he said to me about the influence of Miss S., upon Helen. If he will, you will understand why I am unable to have Miss S., remain in this school. Neither he nor Mr. Wright had any hesitation in saying that under no consideration would they have permitted Miss S., to have continued with them.

My interest in Helen is stronger than I can tell you, and you may well understand that no slight "misunderstanding" would have led me to risk the continuance of my direction of her education. On the other hand, I do not wish to harm her teacher, and therefore I do not make any accusation against her, further than may be implied in saying that she has proved this year, to use the language of the manual of this school, "not a harmonious member of the household."

It seems to me probable that Mrs. Keller has decided to assume her personal care of Helen, and to give her rest for a time from study, but I do not know. Neither do I know

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where they are. They were at Wrentham when I last heard, and I suppose that they are there still, because Mrs. Keller told me, when she was here, that she would come to see me again before going home. As Miss Sullivan said the same when she was here with Mr. Hitz. I am expecting the call.

If Helen's education is so suddenly interrupted, it will be a sad conclusion, and I still trust that some way will be found to attend allow it to go on to the triumphant end that would certainly be attained.

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Whether a visit from you would be a means of bringing on a favorable result, I cannot say, I would like to read to you my correspondence with Mrs. Keller and Mrs. Hopkins.

The subject of leaving Helen is not a new one with Miss S., for she broached it when she was at the Wright-Humason School, as the Principals told me. She brought it up at once, so Mrs. Keller wrote, as soon as I made my protest against overwork. Doubtless a relaxation of the strain for a year or so, might benefit Helen. I do not know.

You see that I am as much in the dark as you are.

I remain, my dear Dr. Bell, Sincerely yours, (Signed) Arthur Gilman. Dr. Alexander Graham Bell, Washington, D. C.